

STATE SENATOR • RAYMOND E. BASHAM • 8TH DISTRICT

# Basham Press Release

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## Surgeon General Report Supports Basham's Smoke Free Workplace Bill

*Basham: Secondhand smoke is dangerous to people and jobs.*

LANSING—Citing a report released on June 27, 2006 by the United States Surgeon General, Senator Ray Basham (D-Taylor) renewed his call for action on legislation, SB 394, that would prohibit smoking in bars and restaurants following months of waiting for the bills to be taken up by the Republican-controlled committee where they now sit.

“Secondhand smoke is a serious danger to workers, customers, and our economic security,” said Basham. “It’s costing us millions of dollars in healthcare related expenses and ultimately it kills people – more than 2,000 nonsmokers in Michigan each year.”

Everyday, thousands of Michigan residents who patronize or work in bars and restaurants are involuntarily subjected to secondhand smoke, and the consequences are far-reaching. “The debate is over,” said Surgeon General Richard Carmona in a televised press conference yesterday as he announced that there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke. According to the report, nonsmokers exposed to secondhand smoke at home or work increased their risk of developing heart disease by 25 to 30 percent and lung cancer by 20 to 30 percent. The report went on to state that even the most sophisticated ventilation systems cannot completely eliminate secondhand smoke exposure and that only smoke-free environments afford full protection.

Opponents argue businesses would experience a drop in revenue, but multiple studies have proven false the adverse economic impact claim. In the 14 states that have banned smoking in workplaces, restaurants or bars, none of them have experienced job losses or economic

downturns. In fact, food service establishments typically showed net increases in sales receipts after smoking bans were implemented.

“While the scientific debate may be over, the debate on our bills to ban workplace smoking has yet to begin,” said Basham. “Hopefully this report will convince the Republican Majority in the Senate to bring these bills up for a vote.”

A copy of the Surgeon General’s report, *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke*, is available at <http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/secondhandsmoke/>.

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